THE
# NATION

*MARCH 22, 1958 . . 25c*

## PLANNING FOR THE YEAR 2000

*by J. Bronowski*

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## THEOLOGY OF POWER

*by Brand Blanshard*

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## THE NICE MURDERER: Search for a Motive

*by Hale Champion*

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# LETTERS

## That Pagan Sermon

*[So many requests have come in for copies of C. Wright Mills's "A Pagan Sermon to the Christian Clergy" that we have found it necessary to order reprints. See page 260 of this issue for reprint order form.*

*Below is a sampling of the flood of letters the article provoked.*—Editors.]

*Dear Sirs*: The article by C. Wright Mills in the issue of March 8 is both courageous and powerful. It is a commentary on the moral status of the Christian—and non-Christian—world today that the plain speaking of truth on matters of life and death significance to all of us requires great courage.

I hope the article will be reprinted . . .

HARALD H. LUND

*Higganum, Conn.*

*Dear Sirs*: I feel that I simply must take time out to write.

I have read and reread (and will probably read some more) Mr. C. Wright Mills' A Pagan Sermon to the Christian Clergy. Offhand, I can't recall ever reading anything better in your pages—or anywhere else for that matter. It was simply wonderful; a powerful, powerful piece, a ringing indictment. The Mills type of antibodies are sorely needed today to help fight the sickness—the madness—that has, over the past decade, laid hold of America.

I should like to know that many, many clergymen will hear what Mr. Mills has to say, mull it around in their minds—and take up the challenge he lays down. Because they are the key—the key to a change in men's way of thinking (which is the basic requirement) toward the whole insane structure of power politics, militarism, and ever more diabolical instruments of death and destruction our leaders have erected and continue to add to.

THOMAS BRODERICK

*Schenectady, N.Y.*

*Dear Sirs:* C. Wright Mills' sermon might be ignored by most of the clergy, but I wonder if they can afford to do so honestly.

In this small community we count as friends some outspoken clergymen who are very much alert to the evils of our over-mechanized, and mechanistic, society. The individual churchman outside the large cities seems to be a lot closer to the people, less warped by the fetish of mass media and mass audience.

Nevertheless, the opinion of Mr. Mills, added to those of prominent physicists and geneticists, would confirm the conclusion that the chance for avoiding a nuclear hell is narrowing. In this situation, the responsibility of the church is enormous, and inescapable. . . .

Why not start a third party, the Grass Roots, or Humane, or Peace, or Earth First party? The idea may be utopian, in view of past failures. But at least it would justify and utilize the desire of tens of thousands towards something positive, no matter how naive it might appear to the followers of the "Madison Ave. International."

E. GALLARDO, M.D.
President, American
Interprofessional Institute

*La Salle, Illinois*

*Dear Sirs:* C. Wright Mills' article really rang the gong! One would think, after reading it, that the pious pretensions of the churches have been nailed — but good.

The painful truths that Mills forces out in his article are not entirely pagan in their sponsorship. One notable exception may be seen in the fact that the recently elected president of the National Council of Churches is a pacifist. Nor is Edwin T. Dahlberg alone among pacifists who are widely known in Christian circles. Harry Emerson Fosdick, E. Stanley Jones, Kenneth Scott Latourette and Howard Thurman are a few others who have more than once gone on record against war—not only in a crisis period of cold war but also during the shooting wars of recent years, including World War II. Through organizations such as the Church Peace Mission and the Fellowship of Reconciliation, they have affirmed the supremacy of the commandment to "love your enemy" over the dictates of the nation-state.

This is not to deny the pertinence of Mills' charge against a numerically large Christianity which is only nominally Christian on the question of war. But it is not quite accurate to imply that there have been no voices for peace within the churches. Indeed, where outside of Christianity have there been more numerous or more vigorous advocates of peace and reconciliation?

WILLIAM ROBERT MILLER

*Nyack, N.Y.*

*Dear Sirs:* The clergy to whom Mr. Mills is addressing his pertinent remarks will not consider him a pagan. On the contrary, they will consider him a conscientious Christian . . . a voice in the desert vociferating the agony of mankind now surrounded by fear and doubt, danger and suffering.

(REV.) A. ANGULO

*New York City*

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*NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1958*
*VOLUME 186, NUMBER 12*

THE NATION

# EDITORIALS

## Strict Neutrality

At and preceding the SEATO meetings, Secretary Dulles voiced his usual dark apprehensions of "new aggressive Communist plans" for subversion in Asia. He had some kind words, however, for the Moslem Association, which was preparing a revolt in Central Sumatra. This revolt clearly could not be termed subversive since it was directed against President Sukarno's "guided democracy," in which the Communists are collaborators. Other ingredients in the Indonesian brew are the economic and political difficulties of the Sukarno regime, which, with food stocks low, has been importing rice from Red China and has accepted a Soviet offer of ten Soviet ships aggregating 35,000 tons. Equally significant is the dependence of the Jakarta (Sukarno) Government on oil revenues from the $125 million Caltex field in Central Sumatra, the presence of some 600 American nationals on the island, and the presence of American naval strength in the area.

Unnamed "top officials" in Washington affirmed that President Eisenhower was standing on his pledge of strict neutrality in the dispute between the Government at Jakarta and the Sumatran rebels at Padang. Previously Secretary Dulles, asked to comment on the situation in Indonesia before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, had assured the members that we were "not intervening in the internal affairs of this country." But then he added:

> We would be very happy to see the non-Communist elements, who are really the majority there, exert a greater influence in the affairs of Indonesia than has been the case in the past, where Sukarno has moved toward his so-called guided democracy theory, which is a nice-sounding name for what I fear would end up to be Communist despotism.

Asked about Sukarno's bombing of the rebel-held area with planes made in America, the Secretary replied: "I think that there is a fair chance that out of this will come a curtailment of the trend toward communism. I don't want to be more precisely detailed at the moment than that."

This may all be perfectly innocent and strict neutrality may indeed be observed by Secretary Dulles and Brother Allen and by the forces they could set in motion to ensure that the children of light shall prevail over the children of darkness. But then again, some Indonesians may remember Guatemala, where there was also a government indulgent toward Communists, and they may remember what happened to it. If such recollections of the not too distant past are dredged up, Jakarta will have cold chills, while Padang may entertain pleasant anticipations. It will be interesting to see whose fears are dispelled, whose hopes fulfilled, as "strict neutrality" takes concrete shape.

## Citizens or "Personnel"?

Last week, a B-47 flown by the Strategic Air Force accidentally dropped an atom bomb in South Carolina; the bomb, described as "unarmed," wrecked a house and injured six persons. The atomic material in the bomb did not explode, but it was spread over a considerable area by the T.N.T. trigger explosion, and decontamination squads were sent in to mop it up. Meanwhile "all personnel" were requested by the Air Force to shun the place of the accident. By "personnel" in this context, the Air Force means civilians—what we used to call citizens, people or folks. It is a term used by the military to describe human beings so debased in their reason that they can accept as "unarmed" a missile that destroys a man's house and injures his whole family. Used this way, "personnel" is a very dirty word.

On the same day that this accident was reported, the papers told us that the underground atomic explosion of last September, which the Atomic Energy Commission had said was not detected by the most sensitive instruments beyond a range of 250 miles, was in reality felt at distances greater than 2,000 miles. The point at issue here was whether, in the event of a moratorium on bomb testing, the United States could detect an unauthorized Russian explosion. Not to be rude about it, the AEC was careless of the truth in an issue of grave and immediate international concern.

At times such as these, carelessness so gross comes under the heading of criminal negligence. We, the people, have been confused and misled by our public servants,

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in this case by Admiral Strauss and his colleagues. Why do we not rise up and throw them out of their jobs, ride them out of Washington on the rail of public contempt? Is it because we are no longer people, but only "personnel"? In that case, we may stop worrying lest the Russian hordes sweep out of the East and reduce us to slaves—we have already enslaved ourselves.

## This Recession Will Educate

Of a sudden the recession has become the dominant preoccupation in Washington. Only a few months back, defense was being billed as the key issue in the 1958 Congressional election, but by last week both parties were locked in a feverish competition to see which could establish the clearer public image of itself as the party more concerned with unemployment and better equipped to cope with it. In a month's time, the first phase of the recession has ended not with a whimper but a bang; suddenly the mood has shifted from "wait and see" to "let's get going." On February 12, the President announced that we had heard about the last of the "bad news"; March, he thought, would see "the start of the pick-up." But even before the February figures were released, showing that unemployment had risen by nearly 700,000, the Administration was singing a different tune. As eight Eisenhower Republicans joined with the Democratic leadership in the Senate to demand prompt action, the President released his "Dear Joe, Dear Bill" letter with its seven-point program. Since then Washington has churned with anti-recession proposals; nearly every Senator has his own program. In some quarters the promptness, volume and violence of this reaction has been deplored; "Recession Panics Politicians," reads an editorial caption in the *Christian Science Monitor*. For our part, we are delighted to see that Washington's bipartisan reflexes are in such a good shape after a decade of prosperity and full employment. Not only does this promise to be the most copiously reported recession in history, but the educational content should assay fairly high. Unlike 1929, the principle of federal responsibility has been established; both parties, as their actions clearly indicate, now accept it. This time the public can concentrate on the mechanics and judge the results as each remedy is in turn presented, debated and applied. In short, the stage has been set for a promising experiment in mass education.

## The Doctor's Dilemma

Scanning the financial section as late as last fall, one found concern over inflation, both for its immediate ill effects and lest it lead to deflation later. Now we have the feared deflation and, at least for the time being, inflation too. The question may legitimately be asked whether the Keynesian prescriptions, which are capitalism's only — though seldom acknowledged — remedy against intolerable gyrations of the economy, will prove more than a palliative in the long run. The recent record leaves considerable doubt.

On March 15, 1957, Chairman William McChesney Martin, Jr., of the Federal Reserve, publicly rejected the suggestion of Sumner Slichter and others that the United States could safely allow a "creeping" inflation of 2-3 per cent a year as the price of full employment. "If you take this view," Mr. Martin warned, "then another bust will surely come." Only three weeks later *The New York Times* reported that workers were being laid off in a wide range of major industries as a result of "swollen inventories, sagging demand and shrinking earnings." By mid-1957, several months before Sputnik I appeared in the sky, the economy was already looking to increased government spending for salvation. In August the slide was quite definitely under way, but the Federal Reserve was still raising the discount rate. Wall Street was worrying about recession and expressing its worries on the Exchange, but the White House advisers were still fighting inflation, as were many VIPs of business. Thus Carrol N. Shanks, head of the Prudential Insurance Company of America, urged that the Federal Reserve step still harder on the credit brakes even at "the risk of producing some unemployment and possibly even plunging us into a recession."

He has had his wish. Now we shall see whether a worse cycle of inflation will not be triggered off and after that, possibly, Mr. Humphrey's "hair-curling depression."

The trouble is that Keynes posited neat alternations of depression and boom and offered appropriate remedies for each, such as increased government spending and lowered taxes during depression and higher taxes with decreased spending during a boom. But the concepts of an innovator are always oversimplified. The boom which petered out in 1957 was based on large-scale government spending from the outset. Under such conditions, when recession develops despite the already heavy stimulus by government, the pressure for still bigger shots quickly becomes irresistible, and of course the only really acceptable form of government spending is for armaments; anything trainted with welfare must be cut to the bone —except, possibly, when an election hangs in the balance.

What next? Since prices aren't dropping, the President is right in hesitating to reduce taxes. Mr. Martin is right when he warns that "excessive stimulus during recession can jeopardize long-run stability." Richard Nixon, looking to the next election and the one after that, is politically right in counseling a tax cut. But, after the delicate question is decided as to how much to let up on the rich and well-off ("investors"), the corporations ("job-givers") and the people who haven't enough money to spend ("customers" or ex-customers) there is still no certainty that the boom can be restored to its original exuberance. And beyond that, there is the difficulty with which Lord Keynes was never con-



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fronted: what does the doctor do when the patient is in a state of incipient collapse and incipient euphoria at the same time?

## The Perfection of the Thor

"Perfected Thor Seen In Three Months," reads the headline. The heartwarming news is that the Air Force expects its Thor IRBM which, from British bases, will "cover" (but not necessarily hit) virtually all targets in European Russia, to be "combat-ready" by June. This piece of Air Force press-agentry warrants closer examination than it will get from headline readers.

"Perfected" is a loose term which came to be applied to technological devices in patent law jargon. Actually all it signifies is that the device is sufficiently developed to forestall a rival inventor. There remains a wide gap between legal workability and adequate performance. Engineers never speak of perfection; they are satisfied if a device is "operational."

When the device is a weapon as complex and tricky as the Thor, even predictions of operational capability and "assembly-line" production must be viewed with skepticism, and the more so when a big Air Force promotional effort is under way. As Major General John P. Daley, the Army's Director of Special Weapons, asked in reference to the Thor, "Is it possible to have 'missile production' before you have a missile with demonstrated capacity to deliver a usable warhead to a selected target?"

We have entered an era of diplomatic and military psychopathology in which insanely hazardous measures are contemplated without the fluttering of an eyelash. The pressures for early "perfection" and installation of the Thor are manifold. It, or an equivalent weapon such as the Army's Jupiter, must be ready, publicity-wise at least, for the impending summit conference. Another necessity is to convince the voters that the Republicans have done a splendid job in defending the country against its external enemies. This, almost everyone concedes, can only be done with missiles and space weapons of ever increasing destructive power.

But perhaps the most compelling consideration is that the Air Force should prevail against *its* enemies, among whom, besides the Russians, are the Army (Jupiter) and the Navy (Polaris). The release on the perfection of the Thor was accordingly coupled with another release revealing that Secretary of the Air Force James H. Douglas was perfecting recommendations for scrapping the Jupiter, and still another indicating that the Polaris was next on his list.

Technological premonitions are seldom welcome, but, if heeded, they could make sure that missiles prematurely rushed into production and installed in Britain, and perchance fired, won't fall on the French (or the West Germans) if the safety officer's judgment should prove even less perfect than the missile's, or the imperfections of the latter should not become manifest till it was past the "destruct" point. Until some such miscarriage occurs, apparently the Thor must be force-fed into the European security system. Equally applicable to the Thor is what Brigadier General Thomas R. Phillips, U.S.A. (Ret.), says of the Jupiter: "Too many hundreds of millions of dollars are involved and too much high-pressure steam had been generated in the service to let it rest."

## Dr. Teller and Dr. Brown

Harrison S. Brown is not the father of the H-bomb or any other instrument of destruction, great or small. He is only professor of geochemistry at the California Institute of Technology. On March 9, though, he made a speech at the University of Minnesota which it would be well for the President, his scientific advisers, and every literate American to read and ponder.

Dr. Brown made a point bearing the novelty of the self-evident which has not been stated before—that it is necessary to solve problems on the emotional as well as on the intellectual level. And its corollary, that in politics scientists have emotions like other men. This brought him to the emotions of Dr. Edward Teller, who, said Dr. Brown, seems to be motivated by a "deep-rooted hatred of the Soviet Union which borders upon the fanatic. From this hatred there stems the belief that *no* agreement with the Soviet Unon can be trusted and that in our modern technological age *no* inspection system can be relied upon."

That the Soviet Union is to be feared by the United States is perfectly true, and vice versa. But to allow these fears to determine policy to the exclusion of all other factors is political folly and also, possibly, biological suicide. In the long run the world's problems would be no less feverish if the Soviet Union should obligingly sink into the sea or disintegrate in accordance with the Dulles formula. The nuclear weapons would remain and other nations would develop them, and the Tellers of tomorrow would be as vindictive and hopeless as those of today.

"I believe," says Dr. Brown, "that Dr. Teller is willfully distorting the realities of the situation. I believe that it is possible for us to secure agreements with the Soviet Union to stop tests and I believe further that the agreements could be of such a nature that the Soviet Union would adhere to them because it would be very much to her advantage to do so." Brown disagrees particularly with Teller's thesis that the United States would be at an inherent disadvantage in any such agreement because the Soviet Union would "bootleg" tests. The agreement, Brown argues, need not bar all testing, only those tests that could be detected by the established network. "This would mean that no appreciable radio-



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activity could be poured into the atmosphere to contaminate the air, no appreciable air pressure waves could be initiated, no large ground waves could be generated." If Teller or his Russian counterparts could devise means to get around these restrictions, they would be free to do so. At least they would not be as free as they are now, and the world would be that much safer for mankind.

Teller says that he knows Brown well. "He is a nice boy and has done some good work," he added. Teller is fifty, Brown forty. It may be that the boy knows the father of the H-bomb better than the father knows the boy.

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# PLANNING for the YEAR 2000 . . *by J. Bronowski*

*London*

A SPECTER is haunting the Western world—yes, today as in 1848. But it is no longer the one that was paraded in the Communist Manifesto. Today the name of the specter is automation.

In every industrial country, men are looking with alarm at the installation of new automatic machines. They see the machines taking over work which, until a few years ago, seemed to need the most delicate human judgment. For the new machines do not merely replace the brute power of the muscle—machines have been doing that for nearly 200 years, ever since first the water wheel and then the steam engine were brought into the factory. The new machines are beginning to replace a gift which is neater and more specifically human: the ability of the eye to measure, of the hand to adjust, of the brain to compare and to choose. When the Luddites smashed factory engines in 1811, they were fighting, hopelessly, against their mere physical power, which dwarfs the strength and with it the output of a man. But the specter of automation points its long shadow at his intellect.

In the United States as in England, and in most industrial countries, the automatic control of machine operations has gone farthest in the making of motor cars. This may be because, whenever anybody wants a car, everybody wants one; and alas, it is equally true that whenever anybody does not want a car, then all at once nobody wants one. That is, the motor industry is peculiarly sensitive to good times and to bad times; and in England, it was putting in automatic machines just when the times turned abruptly from good to bad. The result was panic among employers, a bitter but divided strike by the workmen, and bewilderment (heavily lathered with platitudes) in the Government. No one is clear whether the dispute reached back to automation, or was merely a by-product of the credit squeeze; and was the strike a protest against *any* dismissal of workers, or only against their sudden dismissal?

Questions like these are never answered in the day-to-day of politics. A compromise is reached, a crisis is settled for the moment; and when the next crisis comes, we suddenly find that what had been a midnight compromise has become a permanent principle. For example, the strike of Britain's auto workers was settled by paying some of them compensation for the loss of their jobs. This is a new principle in English industry. Is it really good government, is it good sense, to invent such a principle on the spur of the moment in order to get on with the export of motor cars?

There are political thinkers who believe that it *is* good sense, or at least that it is inevitable, that issues are decided in this way. They say that all acts of state are particular acts, and that they do not conform to a principle but rather, one by one, combine to form the principle which wise historians read into them after the event. It is useless, these thinkers say, to ask statesmen in advance whether men who are displaced by machines should or should not be paid compensation: that will be decided at the historical moment when the change comes, almost by accident, by the strength of the two sides, and by the social backing they can muster.

But surely it is possible for men, even if they are historians, to be wise before the event. I think that there are some changes in the structure of our society which can be foreseen now. It can be foreseen that in the year 2,000 more people will do one kind of job and fewer will do another; that one kind of thing will be valued and another will not. That is, we can draw now the bony skeleton of any industrial society in the year 2,000. It may be a world society or a city state; it may live in a settled peace or still under the threat of war; it may be democratic or totalitarian. Whatever it is, I believe that life in it will have certain large features.

FIRST, IT IS of course plain that everyone will have at his elbow several times more mechanical energy than he has today. The population of the world must be expected nearly to double itself by the year 2,000. But the rate at which energy is being added, particularly in the industrial countries, is much faster than this. The four billion people who will be alive in the year 2,000 will not all have the energy standard of Western Europe today, where every inhabitant commands the me-

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*J. BRONOWSKI, distinguished British scientist and man of letters, is the author of* Science and Human Values, *which appeared in* The Nation *of December 29, 1956, and will appear in book form next week, published here by Julian Messner. Mr. Bronowski is also the author of* The Face of Violence *and* The Common Sense of Science. *He is the director of the Coal Research Establishment of the British National Coal Board.*



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chanical equivalent of about five tons of coal a year. But they can be expected to average about half this standard—say, the equivalent each of two tons of coal a year.

THE USE OF energy per head is closely linked with the standard of living, and the rise that I have forecast is therefore in itself the mark of a massive advance in living standards. But more than the crude figures, it is the whereabouts, the distribution of this energy that is significant. Most energy of this kind is generated in electric-power stations, and today these stations run, nearly all of them, on coal. The real difficulty in getting energy to Central India or Northern Australia or the Copper Belt in Africa is the difficulty of carrying coal there. In the year 2,000, the greater part of the world's electrical energy will be generated from nuclear fuels. A nuclear fuel such as uranium or heavy hydrogen is over a million times more concentrated than coal; one ton of it does the work of more than a million tons of coal. Therefore it will be possible to carry the fuel, and to generate the energy, wherever it is wanted. There will no longer be a reason for the great industrial concentrations in the Ruhr, in Northern England and in the Eastern United States. And what is as important, it will at last be as simple to have energy for agriculture as for industry.

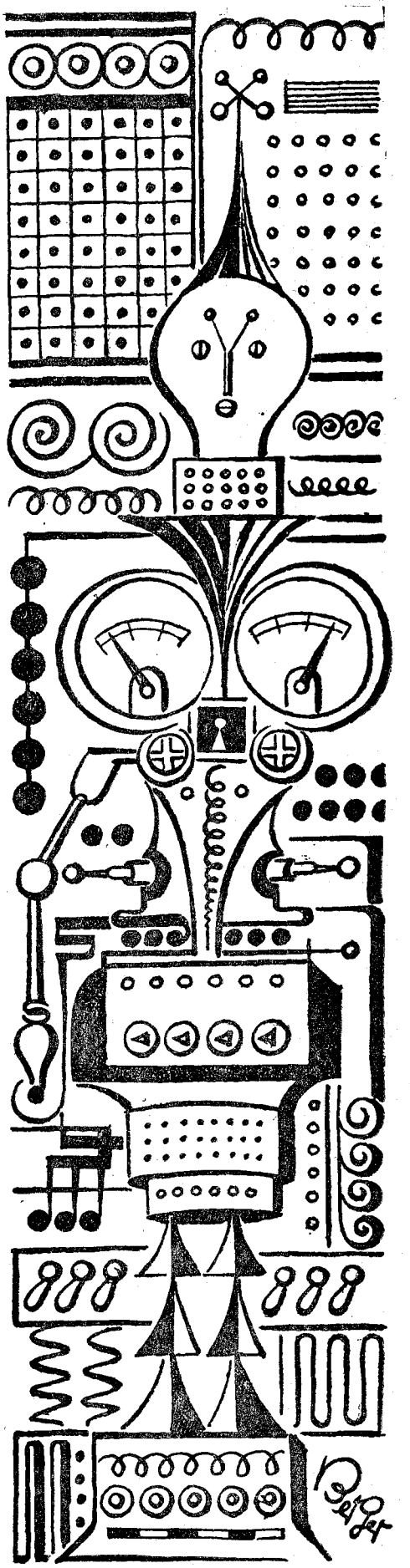
Second, there will be advances in biological knowledge as far-reaching as those that have been made in physics. For fifty years now, we have been dazzled by a golden rain of exciting and beautiful discoveries about matter and energy—the electron, the quantum, relativity, the splitting of the atom, the proton, the neutron, the mesons—the bright list seems to have no end. But do not let us be blinded by them to the work which has been done in the last twenty years in the control of disease and of heredity. We are only beginning to learn what happens when we use a selective killer of weeds or breed a new strain of corn, when we feed anti-biotics to pigs or attack a cattle pest. That is, we are only beginning to learn that we can control our biological environment as well as our physical one. For the year 2,000, this will be critical. Starvation has been prophesied twice to a growing world population: by Malthus about 1800, by Crookes about 1900. It was headed off the first time by taking agriculture to America, and the second time by using the new fertilizers. In the year 2,000, starvation will be headed off by the control of the diseases and the heredity of plants and animals—by shaping our own biological environment.

And third, I come back to the haunting theme of automation. The most common species in the factory today is the man who works or minds a simple machine—the operator. By the year 2,000, he will be as extinct as the hand-loom weaver and the dodo. The repetitive tasks of industry will be taken over by the machines, as the heavy tasks have been taken over long ago; and mental tedium will go the way of physical exhaustion. Today we still distinguish, even among repetitive jobs, between the skilled and the unskilled; but in the year 2,000, *all* repetition will be unskilled. We simply waste our time if we oppose this change; it is as inevitable as the year 2,000 itself—and just as neutral.

But its implications go very deep. For it will displace the clerk as well as the fitter; and the ability to balance a ledger will have no more value, or social status, than driving a rivet. This is the crux in the coming of automation, that it will shift the social standing of those who do different kinds of work. And this is why these speculations about the year 2,000 are in place: because the shift is already going on, and it is our business to foresee now where it is certain to take us.

IN THEMSELVES, the changes I have described will not determine whether by the year 2,000 Africa will become industrialized, whether the nations will still be testing bombs, or whether we shall live under totalitarianism or under democracy. They will not even determine whether we shall live in large communities or small ones.

This last point is odd and easily





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overlooked, but I think that it is important. For 200 years now, it has been the rule that, as a nation has grown in industrial strength (and with it in industrial complexity), so more and more of its workers have had to move together into large cities. In the sixteenth century, Queen Elizabeth I of England passed laws to prevent the growth of London, yet today Greater London houses nearly one-fifth of the population of Britain, and carries on about a quarter of all her industries. The same process of industrial concentration has been at work in France, in Germany and in America.

There are several forces which prompt this process. One is the hunger of industry for power; and in the past, power has been cheap only where it has been made on a massive scale. A second force has been the growing specialization of agriculture. And a third has been the sheer physical need to have large numbers of people to handle manually semi-finished goods through the many stages of manufacture.

NOT ONE OF these reasons need have force fifty years from now. The atomic-power plant need not be large; if it can reasonably drive a submarine now, it can reasonably power a community then. In the same way, biological control of the heredity and the disease of plants and animals will make it possible in the year 2,000 to grow our food in smaller units. But potentially the most powerful influence on the size of future communities, of course, is the coming of automatic machines. They make it possible for a few men to take a complex product such as a drug or an engine through all the stages of its manufacture. By using automatic machines, quite small communities can live in the elaborate world of industry; and they can do so either as the makers of some one product for a nation or, what is more difficult, as units which are self-contained and self-sufficient.

I have stressed the change which is possible in the size of the community, because this happens to be an historical subject as well as a critical one. Back in the 1820s, the pioneer of an idealistic socialism in Britain, Robert Owen, insisted that the industrial revolution of his day ought in the end to lead to smaller, not larger, communities. He hoped that societies of between 1,000 and 1,500 people, working co-operatively, could survive, and he actually founded some in America. In the setting of his time, Robert Owen was premature; but he was not wrong. There are now industrial developments which open the way to smaller communities, if we choose to take that way. Atomic energy and automation are among them; and so are the radio-telephone and the helicopter and the microfilm, because they all help to make it possible for the man in the village to be physically and intellectually as well equipped as the man in the metropolis. The size of the future community really depends only on the rarest skill which it needs to support on the spot — the surgeon, the brilliant teacher, or the matinee idol. Fifty years from now, a community of 10,000 may well be large enough to afford that.

*But what such a community cannot afford is the unskilled worker.* The atomic-power plant, the agricultural station, the automatic factory—none of them has a place for him. In the small community, each unskilled man is a heavy burden.

In a profound sense, therefore, the choice ahead of us is this: If between now and the year 2,000, we can, step by step, turn the men who now do our repetitive work into men with individual skills, then we have a prospect of living in small and homogeneous communities. But if we remain with a large reservoir of unskilled men, then society will continue to move towards larger and larger concentrations.

To my mind this is a profound political choice; it is the choice which we must make now, every day, in a hundred tiny actions. We are about to have introduced, day by day, here and there, another and another automatic machine. One will do the work of ten typesetters, another will displace a hundred auto workers; and soon, a third will take the place of a thousand clerks. I have said repeatedly that automation today is coming to do the work of the brain, and therefore is taking the place of the white collar worker. If these men are permanently reduced to unskilled work, they will become the material for a new army of Brownshirts. Hitler's squads were recruited in just this way, from unemployed men whose collars had once been white.

That is already the danger in the short term. And it remains a danger in the long term, too, threatening the generations ahead of us. If we allow the survival of a permanent reservoir of unskilled workers, then we do two things: we insure that our cities will get larger and larger; and we connive at a permanent war in society between the skilled and the unskilled. It seems to me most likely that a society of this kind, concentrated in large units and divided between top dogs and under dogs, will fall into a totalitarian form of government. I do not need to look to the year 2,000 for that; George Orwell looked only so far as 1984, and saw it.

TECHNICAL foresight is a necessity; our political actions depend on it. And they do not depend on taking the short view; they depend on the long view, on looking far beyond the years of which we can speak positively—they depend on seeing the large features of a future whose detail is still unformed. We cannot escape the large bony features: atomic energy, biological control, automation. But the body of society is not all bone; a good many different bodies clothe that skeleton. It is possible on that skeleton to have either a totalitarian or a democratic society. I think that it can be foreseen that the future society will be totalitarian if it contains many unskilled men working in large cities, and will be democratic if it consists of skilled men working in small communities.

Changes toward one or another of these future schemes are not brought about by some instant illumination, a thunderclap of universal conversion. They are brought about by our small daily acts, if we know in what direction we are trying to act. And I have given two general directions to which we should bend whatever we do, whenever we have the choice.



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We should move men to smaller and specialized communities; and we should train them at every opportunity to move to work of higher skill.

THIS IS A very general course; but then no social scientist of great sense has ever claimed that planning can be anything but general. Others have argued that planning, even general planning, is of no use: these anti-rational philosophers say that the ship of state is no mechanical *Queen Elizabeth,* but a raft, a *Kon-Tiki,* whose course must be determined from moment to moment to meet new conditions as they arise. The comparison is apt, but the inference is wrong. For the voyage of the *Kon-Tiki* had to be planned with special care and, in the best sense, with scientific foresight, precisely because it did not possess the powerful engines and the brute steering equipment of the *Queen Elizabeth.* Those who rode the *Kon-Tiki* needed to know, far more than the luxury passengers of the *Queen Elizabeth,* what the ocean currents were, and needed to look ahead at the large direction in which they would ride these currents. Society is indeed like the *Kon-Tiki,* and this is why we need to be so far-sighted in charting and taking advantage of the long currents of history which are to carry us into the future. We can steer our society only if we combine a general knowledge of where we are bound to go with a specific will of where we want to go.

This is the true art of the statesman in the age of atomic energy, biological control and automation. And it is relevant to recall that another word for the control of automatic machines today is the word "cybernetics," and that this is a Greek word for the art of steering a ship.

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# THE GENERAL YAWNED . . *by Russell A. Fraser*

TWO able and intelligent politicians addressed themselves, the other day, in a public conversation at Princeton, New Jersey, to the problems of American foreign policy in the age of the hydrogen bomb. The Hon. Thomas K. Finletter, sometime Secretary of the Air Force in the Truman Administration, and Representative Eugene J. McCarthy, Democratic Congressman from Minnesota, must have been gratified, and might well have been touched, at the capacity crowd which turned out to hear them. Quite obviously, the crowd was concerned.

Those who came late, and found no seats remaining, elected to stand, as inconspicuously as they could, against the walls. It was hot under the low balcony in the rear of the hall; no one had thought to open the windows. An Air Force Brigadier, sitting back there among the civilians, nodded sleepily and snapped to and forbore even to smile at the sallies of the Minnesota Congressman who, repudiating all suggestion of partisan politics, ventured even so to jibe a little at the party in power. Jibes of that sort being pretty much incumbent on all elected persons, and signifying nothing, no one took them seriously. Still, an audience enjoys the ceremonial flying of the kettle and the pot, and is willing for the moment to pretend, in good fun, that Joe Martin and Sam Rayburn are really such opposites as Hamilton and Jefferson. The General, however, would not enter in, not even when the Congressman got on to Mr. Dulles, the best and the easiest butt of a joke since the Brooklyn Dodgers that were, and suggested that the Secretary was bemused by the notion of a meeting at the summit because he felt that wherever *he* was, there the summit was too.

Perhaps the General was bored from a conviction that what he heard was hardly worth the hearing, that the verdict on the question which Messrs. Finletter and McCarthy were undertaking to adjudicate was already in. Perhaps he was right. For the speeches of the Congressman and the former Secretary of Air were not so much trite or uninspired or abstract—and on occasion they were all of these—as, for the most part, simply irrelevant.

To the audience that must have seemed a pity. It may even have made for some surprise, for the two gentlemen who spoke were well informed and, no question, well intentioned. Certainly Mr. McCarthy is not the sort of politician who boggles at sacrifice, or talks of pouring money down European ratholes. He seems genuinely to care about the fragile peace that obtains, and the fate of the peoples whose life or death turns on the keeping of the peace. Yet what he had to say made sense only now and again, because only a few scraps and pieces in all his discourse were germane.

The foreign policy of the Congressman in a nuclear age, boiled down, comes simply to this: we have got to sell our total civilization (the totality, worse luck) to the uncommitted peoples of the world. Military suasion is out altogether. The Africans and Asians hold no brief for military suasion. It falls to us then to convince the Africans and Asians that the libertarian zeal which moved our forefathers is alive in us still. The way to convince them is to clear the French from North Africa, and the British perhaps from Nassau, attending the while to Little Rock, our own dirty back yard. We must initiate in short a new birth of freedom.

What is one to say? What the French did to the village of Sakiet Sidi Yussef, what they are doing every day in Algeria, and the British in the Caribbean, and the incredible Malan in South Africa, and the Soviets in Hungary, these things stink in the nostrils. Any man with a tittle of sense and sensibility is concerned to see that they come to a stop. If, then, one girds at the Con-

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gressman for making such concern the gravamen of his little philippic, it is not because one questions his sincerity, or because one can look on more equably than he at the sufferings of unhappy people. What dismays about the Congressman's proposal is that it is sterile.

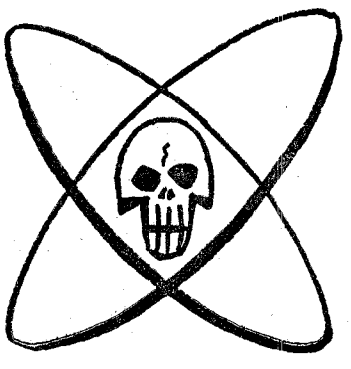
IS IT SOBERLY proposed, and by a supporter of the bipartisan coalition, that the United States intervene in the sordid quarrels of the British, and the French? One may not care a row of pins for the Grand Alliance; but Congressman McCarthy most certainly does, and so do his confreres in the House and the Senate, and the President does also, and the persons in the Pentagon. The Congressman's proposal would smash the Alliance—whose dissolution has been impending, in the press, these many years—really smash it, once and for all. The proposal is thus a kind of *non sequitur*. It is the beating of wings in a void. That is why, like so much political discussion in the United States today, it engenders not enthusiasm, but weariness. Words, words. "Well, of course!" one says, of the sentiments of the speaker, and applauds their purity of purpose, and understands, even while applauding, that they have as much chance of giving birth as a stuffed fox in a gun room.

But the Congressman's proposal is not merely stillborn; it is peripheral. Is the world to be fired in a nuclear holocaust, or is the world after all to survive? That is the issue, the only issue, really, the single text, the refrain of all poems, and all the lines of all the litanies. Everything else is ancillary, off there on the fringes.

Were the Congressman to bear witness to that truth, were he to adjure his audience to sink the bombs in the sea, to dismantle the missiles, why then the listener might begin to slough off his frustration, the sense that he and all his fellows are but ciphers, that the great issues are decided without his concurrence, that indeed the great issues are not adverted to seriously at all, that politicians propose, and technicians dispose, and dispose on a level the very existence of which the politicians seem hardly to recognize. Even the General—were the Congressman to speak so — might feel impelled to listen.

He did not feel impelled. For the Congressman, as it happens, had not that kind of counsel to offer. That was not what he meant at all. His counsel was emphatically otherwise: we must continue, as we go about the business of becoming apostles of freedom, we must continue to hold our guards high. An awfully tired injunction, that, and not a very useful one.

And so Secretary Finletter seemed, with great courtesy, to suggest. The Secretary, who remains a member of the Democratic Party, paid homage, perforce, to the concept of preparedness for a limited war. It is good, he asserted, and desirable, to maintain in the interior a striking capability of, say, four divisions, at an annual cost of, say, several billions of dollars. Very well. *Mea culpa*. But then the Russians and their Chinese allies can oppose to that force, however much one increases it, a superiority in numbers more than daunting, indeed almost decisive. And besides, the very notion of a limited war is so much parlous nonsense. Total war is most likely the kind of war the world will face, if the guns begin to fire. And it is fearfully simple to see that war coming to be. Given, a hundred missile bases staggered over the world, and operated by persons who are human, after all, and so prey to imperfection; given, one deranged or merely clumsy bombardier, aloft on patrol about the confines of the USSR; given, an officer, fervid enough, sufficiently commanding, sufficiently incoherent of mind, to initiate a preventive war—the General, conceivably, now half asleep in the back of the room—given all that, it is fearfully simple to foresee the war that will finally overwhelm us.



Despair isn't marketable, and Secretary Finletter didn't counsel despair. Disarmament, he thought, was the clue to the labyrinth. We had better pursue it, however tedious the effort. All honor to the Secretary, though he offered no specific proposals. Who, however, will support him? The industrialists, who might have made ploughshares, but who would find it now vexatious and expensive to retool? or the Congressmen, who represent the industrialists? or the Democratic strategists who suggest yet more armaments to bolster a sagging economy? The Secretary's proposal, as pure of purpose as Congressman McCarthy's, looks to be as little likely of success.

THERE IS, of course, an alternative proposal, though no one bespeaks it, another way than the way of world war and world destruction. For the first time in modern history, the celebrated least common denominator, apostrophized in general and in particular ignored, the man in the street who has always believed that international problems are at bottom a pretty simple affair, complicated gratuitously by excessively sophisticated politicians in striped pants, who has always been sure that he himself, if given the chance, could cut through those problems as Alexander cut through the knot: for the first time this sanguine fellow is right. He does not need the expertise and the secret information vouchsafed to Messrs. Acheson and Dulles. He needs only the power, and the ability to articulate a few fairly simple words. And, were he conceded the power, and the needful articulation, he would have but to proclaim unilateral disarmament, the cessation of all nuclear tests, the scrapping of all nuclear weapons.

To be sure, he would run a grave risk in so proclaiming. Perhaps the Soviets would not care to follow suit. Perhaps the united force of world opinion would not suffice to drive them to it. But the alternative risk, not to dare, not to proclaim, but to continue to play Russian roulette with Eisenhower and Khrushchev, trusting wanly and foolishly that one's number will never come up when all the odds



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insist that ineluctably it will—that is the graver risk. Only knaves and fools will care to accept it.

Well, they keep accepting it, the knaves and the fools, and with predictable and harrowing consequence. And that perhaps is why the General seemed unwilling to scrutinize with any seriousness the proposals of the eminent politicians. He was thinking, it may be, of the American bases, more than 200 of them now, containing, if you will, the borders of the Soviet Union; thinking that every hour of every day a certain portion of the bombers of the Strategic Air Command depending on those bases, are in the air, bearing hydrogen bombs. To say that war is possible, given that day-by-day routine, is to understate to the point of fatuity. War is probable, and with the passing of each day, pregnant with the chances of human error and human malice, war grows more probable still.

The day before the Secretary and the Congressman asked themselves what might be done, an American Sabre Jet, flying a simulated ground support mission, was shot down in Korea. That the plane had violated the Communist line is now conceded. What is macabre about the story—one feels oneself inhabiting a kind of nightmare in which rational consideration no longer obtains—is that "Under standing orders [American pilots] . . . are forbidden to fly over the 2½-mile-wide demilitarized zone that stretches across the peninsula separating North from South Korea" (AP, 3/6/58). Who, in the name of sanity, from the air, in a jet, is to honor that pitiful zone?

The zone has not been violated very often, not many planes have been downed, no bombs have yet fallen, nor missiles gone awry. War is not already accomplished. These, and not the newest incident in North Korea, are the spectacular, the truly sensational, facts. They make a man count his blessings, and blink a little at his luck, and wonder most of all how long it will hold.

# THEOLOGY of POWER . . *by Brand Blanshard*

WHAT HAS happened to the old alliance between religion and liberalism? I remember when it was common for people to think as follows: "If Jones is a religious man, he will take Christian ethics seriously; if he does that, he will be concerned about other people's rights and needs, and will assume that if he deals with others generously and fairly, they will repay in kind. He will believe in morals in politics; he will have the international mind; he is the sort of man we can count on to support International Courts and Leagues of Nations."

After reading a new book on *Ethics and United States Foreign Policy**, I gather that such thinking is out of date. The book is written by a churchman high in Protestant councils. Dr. Ernest Lefever, who has served as a specialist in international affairs for the National Council of Churches, has traveled widely in Europe and Asia, and was correspondent in Germany for *The Christian Century*. He obviously knows what is going on in the world, and he ought to know what is going on in the minds of churchmen. What he discloses on the latter point is to me disturbing.

He writes in his first paragraph:

> November 2, 1956, may well be remembered as a day of irony. On that day our government joined with its arch enemy, the Soviet Union, and Egypt, her willing tool in the Middle East, in condemning our two closest and staunchest allies, Great Britain and France. This act, which helped to destroy the moral and political position of Britain and France in the Mediterranean world, was done in the name of morality. Herein lies its irony.

Although these states were resorting to force in violation of sworn agreements and in the teeth of the public opinion of the world, Dr. Lefever thinks it naive and "ironic" to condemn them on moral grounds. He quotes the President's ringing address, "If the United Nations once admits that international disputes can be settled by using force, then we shall have destroyed the very foundation of the organization and our best hope of establishing a real world order." On this he comments coolly:

> This Presidential address was a remarkable utterance not only because it was devoted primarily to censuring a friendly nation in the name of international morality or because it made no fewer than fifty-four favorable references to the United Nations, but because it was a transparently eloquent demonstration that the American legalism, moralism, and national self-righteousness . . . was still very much with us.

One begins to rub one's eyes. Here is a churchman speaking in the name of ethics, and he tells us that to condemn the unilateral use of force in plain breach of engagements is legalism, moralism and self-righteousness. He protests against "American liberal idealism," deprecates the decisions of the United Nations as "not legally binding or politically enforceable," deplores "the nineteenth-century illusion that man can shape his destiny by calculation, planning and discipline," and laments a "crusading ideology." He writes, "In 1934, William Graham Summer said: 'If you want war, nourish a doctrine.'" (Incidentally, Summer died in 1910.)

What is the source of this cynical disillusionment? It is apparently threefold, lying partly in a reactionary theology, partly in a confusion

**Ethics and United States Foreign Policy* by Ernest W. Lefever (Living Age Books, published by Meridian Books Inc., $1.25).

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about ethics, and partly in half-justified doubts about the U.N.

First, as to theology. Dr. Lefever is steeped in neo-orthodox teaching. He thinks we should turn from the misleading idealism which relies on "man's rationality and capacity for altruism" and try to learn from the Hebrew prophets, the early Church and the Reformers. What is the important message that these teachers have to give us? Primarily that man's nature is "morally ambiguous," an often-repeated phrase. What does it mean? Apparently that though man was created "a little lower than the angels," he is now corrupted through and through by "original sin." It is because he is thus corrupted that those liberals are mistaken who rely on his capacity for being reasonable and just. They need to be admonished by "the Biblical recognition of the weaknesses and moral ambiguity of man." In the light of the Bible teaching that not merely in practice but also in nature we are corrupt and sunk in sin, the very hope that we can achieve justice and righteousness by our own secular effort is utopian pride.

Now this teaching may mean one of three things. If it means that man was created pure, that he fell from grace by an act of free will, and that his sin was somehow propagated through all his descendants, I shall not try to refute it, because readers of *The Nation* will hardly regard it as worth refuting. If it means that we are less than morally perfect and that our reach exceeds our grasp, it is true, but a platitude. If it means that we cannot by any effort make ourselves just and reasonable men—not perfect men, of course, but men dominated by and dedicated to the ideals of justice and reason—then the doctrine is worse than false; it is pernicious. The two most influential theologians in Europe, Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, are teaching that man is so "wholly other" than his Creator that his clearest thought and highest ideals are also "wholly other"; rational and revealed knowledge, says Brunner "are as far apart from each other as heaven is from hell." The teaching of these men is widely accepted in American theological schools. Of course the deliberate disparagement of merely human reason and goodness in the name of religion is not a new thing in the world, at any rate since Kierkegaard, but its adoption by reformers and preachers is a matter of some concern.

I HAVE SAID that this doctrine seems to me both pernicious and false. It is pernicious because it is cynical about the ideals most men are bound to live by. The majority of mankind is not Christian, and if, as Brunner holds, "only religious ethics [i.e. Christian ethics] is really ethical," then we cannot admit that most of the peoples with whom we are brought into daily contact in the United Nations have any real ethics at all. Nor can we admit that the Mills or Morleys, the Lincolns or Masaryks, even the Gandhis and Schweitzers of the world, had anything but a pale approximation to real goodness. This debases the coin of morality.

Furthermore, the doctrine is false. The old-fashioned liberal was not wrong but right in holding that we can make ourselves into just and reasonable men, that by so doing we can rebuild our communities, that fairness tends to inspire fairness, and that where there is a joint effort to be fair, there will be genuine progress. Dr. Lefever decries "the rationalism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which believed in human perfectibility and historic progress." But if "perfectibility" means the capacity to be perfect, and "progress" means the inevitability of progress, no instructed liberal ever believed in either. If they mean that by devoted effort we can make ourselves and our world enormously better, which is all that liberals claim, Dr. Lefever is doing no service in denying such convictions.

I said that the second source of this neo-orthodox disillusionment was a confusion about ethics. One of Dr. Lefever's chief butts of attack is something he calls absolutism in ethics. "The advocates of a political ethic based directly upon absolute moral principles understood neither the limits of politics nor the Biblical recognition of the weaknesses and moral ambiguities of man"; "*right*," he says, "is always a relative term." Here again we must distinguish. If an "absolute moral principle" means, for example, a rule of truth-telling or promise-keeping which must be adhered to though the heavens fall, it was precisely the liberal tradition from Mill to Hobhouse that offered the most effective challenge to such principles. These thinkers would regard it as absurd to approach an international crisis armed only with abstract rules. They would say that each case is a fresh problem and that the decision must be taken in the light of particular circumstances. In only one respect were they absolutists. They held that in every instance the overriding concern should be to secure the greatest good on the whole; what produced *that* was right, and anything else was wrong. And if some evil inevitably attended the achieving of the greatest good, that did not make one a sinner, any more than it made a sinner of the dentist or surgeon who produced unavoidable pain.

Thus the liberals in a sense did have an objective and absolute standard. Is it this standard that Dr. Lefever would deny? If so, he is not ethically in advance of them, but far behind them. If he means by saying "right is relative" that there is no rational measure by which the actions of Arabs and Israelis, Dulles and Khrushchev, can be appraised, then it is not the liberal who is a cynic and skeptic; it is he. The liberal believes that in a rational ethics we have an objective court of appeal. If it is denied that there is any such court, the natural alternative is a politics of force and self-interest.

Indeed, that is the policy which Dr. Lefever seems at times to be advocating. He would probably disavow this; he seems often to retract with one hand what he offers with the other. But he quotes Hans Morgenthau with approval: "To act successfully . . . is political wisdom. To know with despair that the political act is inevitably evil, and to act nevertheless, is moral courage." And one of the main points of his book is that we are taking United Nations opinion too seriously and that we should plot the course of our national interest independently of it.



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What is the ground of this disillusionment with the United Nations? It is partly the prior disillusionment with human nature itself, which is rooted in a pessimistic theology. But it has in part a more substantial basis. Dr. Lefever points out that "the United Nations is a voluntary association of nation-states, not an international government. It can neither pass laws nor enforce them." On the important questions, he says, it is hard to get any consensus. The nations that most urgently need curbing are precisely those that cannot be curbed, and they have repeatedly and successfully flouted United Nations judgments. Furthermore, there is no assurance that these judgments, which are never disinterested, will be morally or politically sound. Hence "an American policy of relying on and complying with the majority decisions of the United Nations is tenable only so long as the United States believes these decisions to be just and right from her point of view."

This seems to me confused, both morally and factually. Dr. Lefever says that the United Nations cannot enforce its decisions. But he also admits that it has done so, repeatedly and decisively. It did so in Korea by joint force; it made two of the most powerful nations of the world, Britain and France, back down over Suez; and its moral pressure brought Holland into line over Indonesia. To be sure, it sometimes fails. It has failed—so far—over Kashmir, and it failed deplorably over Hungary. But even there, as in South Africa, its influence has been powerful. In any case, is occasional failure a reason for weakening the U.N., or for giving it more strength? Dr. Lefever thinks that even if it were strengthened, no consensus could be hoped for on the important issues. But he admits that a virtual consensus *has* been gained on some extremely important ones. And while he criticizes the U.N. for lacking the power of a world government, he takes a line that would exclude the United States from any effective participation in it even if it were a world government. He argues that the decisions of a world body can hold no authority for the United States unless their claims to justice accord with her own point of view. But is that not the Russian view exactly, the view behind all the vetoes? It is the view that is depriving the United Nations of the sort of power it admittedly needs. It is a view that would have made the United States itself impossible, a view filled with a self-righteousness beyond anything in the liberal armory.

This is not a review of a book. If it were, we should have much to note that is enlightening in Dr. Lefever's pages, including many judicious comments about diplomacy and foreign policy. What we question here is his approach to the chief problem of our time. Ethics and theology no doubt have something to say about this problem. But because they do, it is the more important that they should be sound.

# The Nice Murderer: Search for a Motive.. *Hale Champion*

*San Francisco*

IT WAS AS if the boy in a *Ladies Home Journal* illustration of young love on the campus had suddenly pulled a gun and shot the girl.

At 10:43 p.m. Tuesday, February 26, the telephone rang in the office of the Stanford University *Daily*. "There has been a murder at the ROAC armory," a calm voice reported. Then the line went dead. About three minutes later, a pleasant-faced, sober youth in casually expensive campus garb walked into the Palo Alto, California, police station.

"I want to report a killing," he told the police officer at the desk. "I shot a girl and she's out there in the car." He waited quietly while officers checked the car, a 1957 white convertible, and found the body of a girl, a bullet hole in her left temple.

Then came the insistent, searching questions and the polite, careful, dispassionate answers that have varied hardly at all in the weeks since.

The boy was Thomas Wallace Cordry III, a Stanford University sophomore and the son of a well-to-do insurance executive with offices in both Palo Alto and San Francisco, forty miles to the north.

The girl was Deena Bonn, seventeen, a bright, attractive high school senior and the daughter of an employment-agency owner. The Bonns lived across the street from the Cordrys' Palo Alto home.

"She was a nice girl," Cordry said distantly that night as he began his lucid, composed story of what had happened. For many months, he said, he had felt an urge to kill a girl and then rape her. He had dated occasionally, including one visit to a movie with Deena, but had never had any sexual relations.

"I never had a girl," he said. "For a long time, I wanted to be intimate with a girl. I guess this is really a sex problem. I just felt like shooting some girl and raping her."

Young Cordry, handsome, well-scrubbed and with close-cropped hair, said the first time the "urge" had been overmastering was about a week before the murder. At that time, he got a .22 rifle from a store on approval, then went out in his car, looking for a victim. He didn't find one and returned the rifle to the store.

But on February 26 the "urge" came again. About 4 p.m. he bought the rifle. He spent the early hours of the evening cruising the city's streets in his car, but again found no potential victim. Then, he said, he thought of Deena Bonn, the girl across the street. He called her about 10 p.m., said he had to take a train trip up to San Francisco and asked if she would drive him to the

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depot in his car, then return it to the Cordry garage. After consulting her mother, Deena agreed. As she got into the car, he told her that he had to return the rifle to the Stanford ROTC Armory before catching the train. She drove. As she slowed the car to a stop in front of the armory, which is in a relatively isolated area of the sprawling, placid campus, he raised the gun and shot her through the head without saying a word. Pushing the body aside, he started to drive up into the hills behind the campus, where, he reported, he intended to rape the girl, then toss her body out of the car. In his fantasy he even had planned a specific hideout further up in the hills.

Young Cordry never carried out his declared intentions. He did not touch the girl once he had pushed her body out of the driver's seat. Instead, he turned the car around and, within minutes, came the call to the student newspaper and his appearance at the police station.

That night, several times the next day, and again and again since, he has repeated the story without changing its essential details—the "urge," the almost random selection of a victim, the shooting itself and the half-conscious, but firm, decision not to act out the rest of the fantasy.

There was always regret in the story, too, regret of a distant, reserved kind, the kind usually associated with the accidental breaking of something that is not particularly valuable, but cannot be replaced or repaired.

"I'm just sick about it," he told one reporter only an hour after the murder, his words calm and measured. "It was just something I couldn't control. I couldn't think." In his detached, courteous fashion, he added, "I've just pulled a stunt here, and there's only one way to take it." That way, his subsequent behavior made clear, was to remain detached and courteous.

JUST A FEW days before this senseless, compulsive act of violence, the surviving actor in another, far more notorious, drama of compulsive violence was freed from an Illinois prison. Nathan Leopold, fifty-three, entered that prison at the age of twenty for the 1924 "thrill" slaying, in partnership with his friend, Richard Loeb, of a fourteen-year-old boy they hardly knew.

It would be a mistake to treat the Loeb-Leopold and Cordry cases as two of a kind. There are as many differences as there are likenesses. But one likeness and one difference seem worth examining. In each case, every parent of any sensitivity who read the stories felt a quiver of nervousness. Each asked himself: What do we know about our children? Is there something wrong with us as parents? Is there something wrong with our society? The questions come fast, and the answers come slowly—if they come at all.

The significant difference was in another general response to the news of the Cordry crime. No responsible person has yet called the youth a monster. The girl's parents themselves set the tone.

"The boy doesn't need punishment, only help," said John Bonn, Deena's father, just forty-eight hours after the death of his only child. "I want to go to the county jail to see the boy. He needs to know that he is not an outcast of society." He added, "I do not want revenge. The boy did terrible harm, but he did not commit a crime. A huge thunderbolt had built up within him and it just happened to strike us."

Bonn, it is true, is not an average American. German-born, well-educated, a one-time teacher of drama at Western Reserve University and now a successful businessman, he sought in his grief a measure of understanding and found it. At fifty-nine, he had lived and thought enough to cope with the tragic and the seemingly inexplicable.

Bonn's enlightened voice seemed to be the voice of much of the community. The introduction of psychiatric testimony at the sensational trial of Loeb and Leopold, the classic closing argument of Clarence Darrow in which he asked society to reexamine its concerns in such cases before passing judgment, these were novel and bitterly assailed thirty years ago. The immediate reaction to young Cordry's act was a measure of what had happened since. For in the Cordry case, the first and most important question seems to be: What do the psychiatrists say? The second, directed inward by the parents, by the boy's friends, by Stanford University officials, by much of middle-class society, is: How did we fail him?

THE LAW, of course, has not yet made the whole of this transition, nor has a large segment of public opinion. Tom Cordry will be tried for murder, and the prosecutor has announced he will seek the death penalty. He has a preliminary opinion from two psychiatrists that the boy was and is "legally sane." Under the present definition of legal sanity accepted almost everywhere, including California—that the defendant knew what he was doing and knew that it was wrong—the psychiatrists may be correct (see Guilty or Insane? A New Test, by Manfred Guttmacher, *The Nation*, March 15).

No fuller psychiatric opinion is yet available. But it is obvious that the youth's defense will depend on convincing a jury that he is "not guilty by reason of insanity."

What may make the defense more difficult than in other cases hinging on mental illness, real or asserted, is that the murder itself is the only overt act by the defendant yet established that would strike the average juror as really abnormal or unusual.

A horde of reporters has searched vainly for any relative, friend or acquaintance who can remember a single word or deed of Cordry's that was truly noteworthy. There has been an astounding minimum of hindsight, of the "I should have known something was wrong when he. . . ." variety. The fact is that Tom appeared so normal, so perfectly blended into the Stanford landscape, that not even those close to him seemed ever to have registered any very vivid impression of the boy. With his Ivy League clothes and pleasant looks, there was about him nothing to attract attention. They had heard no overtones in his unremarkable conversations. They had noted no behavior that set him even slightly apart.

"He never gave us any clues," said



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his mother, Helen Cordry, a handsome, poised woman who works with her husband in his successful insurance business. She could only speculate dubiously about what forces had been at work in her son. She had, she said, instilled in him a sense of morality, particularly sexual morality, that perhaps was "too rigid." She was by no means convinced of this, however: "We reared him on the old-fashioned idea of choosing the right type of girls and we always answered any questions he asked to the best of our knowledge. My idea was that he should understand that women should be protected. . . ."

Asked if she would bring her son up differently if she had another chance, she shook her head. "I'm afraid I'd do it the same way," she replied sadly.

Her husband, a stockier, ruddier, older version of the boy, hasn't said much except that he had played a lot of tennis with his son and that their relationship was "normal." Otherwise, he left it to his wife to speak for the family.

When the boy was asked to which parent he might have gone for help in resisting the "urge," if he had chosen that course, he thoughtfully decided it would have been his mother. Even after the murder, however, he apparently felt no need to pour out his story to her. Just before he went to see his parents the first morning after the killing, he sent advance word by his attorney that he had "no explanation to make." After the meeting, they made it clear that he had given them none.

THERE were other indications that Cordry's parents were far from close to the boy. One was simply the physical fact that they stayed at their San Francisco apartment most of the working week, returning only on weekends to the Palo Alto home where Tom was "baching it." Another came from the parents of the dead girl, who observed that when Tom had once come to dinner some six months earlier, he had remarked on how nice it was for a family to have a pleasant dinner together. "We just eat and run at our house," he explained.

There are, however, millions of American boys and girls whose well-meaning parents, intent on providing material benefits for their children as well as for themselves, eventually find that the family lines of communication have broken down. Few of their children commit such senseless crimes.

There are also millions of adolescents attempting to cope with their sexual development and desires in a society that sometimes seems sex-obsessed, but in which the taboos still play an important and often frustrating role. Few commit murder as a result.

WERE there other more meaningful omens of disaster in young Cordry's known history? The psychiatrists or others may come up with many in time. No one has produced any to date.

After an apparently uneventful childhood, he prepared for college at Principia, a St. Louis school of excellent reputation operated by the Christian Science Church. There he was a good student, earning As and Bs with regularity. He was a member of the tennis team. He met and often dated a girl from New York with whom he corresponded for a time after his return to the West Coast to college. But, as often happens in such cases, the letters finally stopped, and the girl has since married.

Tom entered Stanford almost as a matter of course, both his parents having graduated from the university in the class of 1933. He ranked about in the middle of the 1,100-member freshman class in pre-testing. At his parents' suggestion, he began as an engineering student. Living in a dormitory—as do all freshmen on what is still nostalgically known as "The Farm" to alumni—he dated, played tennis and was pledged to a fraternity. Like many other freshmen, he had some trouble with his studies, finding the engineering courses particularly difficult. With the consent of his adviser and his parents, he switched to an "international relations" course at the beginning of his sophomore year. His new goal was to prepare for the U.S. foreign service.

He began this school year living at the fraternity. His studies still did not go well, however, and he expressed a dislike for "group living." In mid-year, he moved out of the fraternity and went back to live at home.

WAS THERE anything unusual in this, or in other aspects of his life at Stanford? The girls he dated, his fraternity brothers and roommates and Stanford officials agreed there was not. The same things that happened to him happened to too many others to be of any significance, they said. There had been no strange or unaccountable incidents involving Cordry at all, not one. Nor were his scholastic problems really great. He had been told he should improve his C— average, but there had not even been a discussion of probation or expulsion. He was still playing tennis and still going out with girls occasionally. His social behavior was pleasant, and though he was not gregarious, he seemed to have a good time and was popular at parties.

In all this, it is quite possible to speculate about a factor here or a cause there. What remains after each bit of speculation, however, is the central, unanswered question. Why, out of all those who have had similar experiences and problems, was young Tom the one who pulled a trigger?

A puzzled sheriff's officer who probably wouldn't have worried about it when Loeb and Leopold were boys, perhaps summed up the case as effectively as anyone in a blunt sentence: "This is a case for the head-shrinkers."



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# BOOKS and the ARTS

## The Gentleman as Diplomat

*CHILE THROUGH EMBASSY WINDOWS: 1939-1953.* By Claude G. Bowers. Simon and Schuster. 365 pp. $5.

***Carleton Beals***

EMBASSY windows can provide only a distorted, limited view. Most diplomatic memoirs are a dreary round of banquets and indiscriminate bouquets, spiced with anecdotes that conceal rather than reveal political truth. But Claude Bowers did get away from his cramped view of Forrestal Park and grim, gray Bulnes Plaza enough to be able to garnish his main silver-covered dish with gentlemanly pictures of places and people, not merely over-polished reflections of the near-great. He summered at small resorts, visited a few landed estates, caught shore-leave glimpses of two desert ports, saw a bit of lake country and got as far south as rain-drenched Valdivia for his favorite pigs-knuckles and sauerkraut. As a cultured New Dealer, he found the impoverished workers of mixed blood, the *rotos,* highly picturesque and was delighted when the "democratic" Chilean president publicly shook hands with one.

Mr. Bowers reserves his brickbats for Nazis and Communists—more reproachfully than intolerantly. When a Chilean girl unexpectedly had her baby in his gardens, he chuckled that the Communists instead of accusing him of paternity merely said he had enticed her there so that her child would be an American citizen. It is when he mentions Argentina, later on the Peronistas (whom he sourly brackets with Communists), that he really sputters. For Argentina—though he does not admit it—blocked his mission at crucial moments, and his feelings are too intense to throw any light on all-important Argentine-Chile relations. He grossly misrepresents their treaty (eventually stymied by United States pressure and money) that was so advantageous to Chile and necessary for proper development of the southern end of the continent.

His reiterated thesis—also his *non mea culpa*—is that Chile failed to break with the Axis until hostilities were nearly over because of the cumbersomeness of Chile's praiseworthy democracy. Yet why the delay if, as he insists, nearly all Chileans were and are ardently pro-United States? His colander thesis does not hold water. Actually the Chileans—fanatically nationalistic and in those days proud of their German-trained, goose-stepping army—love no other country and are particularly wary at all times of the United States. Chile's long neutrality had deep-seated validity, and Bowers would have made a stronger case had he properly presented the reasons. Also, Chilean attitudes would have been clarified for us had he provided a true picture of American business operations rather than a paean of praise of the Bradens, Graces and Guggenheims. No mention of the Cosach scandal! No mention that the fine company houses (in which no American worker would live), the health and social benefits, were forced on the corporations, only after years of bloody conflict, by workers and various Chilean governments. A truthful picture of this evolution to more enlightened business practices would reinforce his argument that Chile would benefit from more North American private capital and technology. Fortunately in recent years—and Bowers applauds this—governments there have made strenuous efforts to emerge from sole dependence on copper and nitrates by diversified industry.

Mr. Bowers' excessive love of bustle, efficiency and cleanliness leads him to dislike the descendants of the original Indian inhabitants, the Araucanos, a fine people whose blood flows in the veins of nearly every Chilean. He lauds Conquistador Valdivia fulsomely, not mentioning his cruelties, but paints a horrendous example (wholly apocryphal) of early Araucano cruelty. Bowers' primitive superstitions about Araucanos will scarcely be backed by reputable anthropologists, even less by Chile's writers, sculptors, painters and musicians, the greatest of whom have found their chief inspiration in Araucano culture.

THE only nineteenth-century political leader praised by Bowers is Diego Portales. Portales entered politics to cover up personal peculations and gain ironclad monopolies. He provoked the first futile war with Peru and Bolivia, destroyed the press, abolished congress, used the firing squad and blocked Chile's painful evolution toward democracy by entrenching the century-long rule by landlords and the army, what Chilean historians brand as "The Great Silence." Yet Bowers describes this crafty, corrupt dictator as "a statesman of vision and democratic ideals." Every time the ambassador went to Casa Moneda (government house) he paused reverently "to look at the bust of this truly great man."

Bowers' fairy-tale of the heroic death of Admiral Prat during the nitrate war is the spoon-fed super-patriotic school-boy version. His eulogies of high church leaders provide no insight into Church-State politics. His account of the great Lota coal strike (he was engaged in negotiations for sending in United States coal to break the strike) is the garbled official story. The coal miners were driven back to the underseas galleries by bayonets to work for less than a dollar a day. Nor does he mention later barbed-wire stockades into which "democratic" President González Videla herded copper and nitrate workers.

The book's highlight is the visit of Eleanor Roosevelt, which he engineered to offset the splendid Argentine delegation at the inauguration of refurbished dictator Carlos

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Ibáñez. A master stroke! Unfortunately Bowers was too much impressed by Mrs. Roosevelt's tireless efficiency to explain why poor Chilean mothers held their babies up to her car windows.

Mr. Bowers' volume is larded with delightful anecdotes, most of which will be new to American readers, and is valuable for its considerable if slanted information. Because of the dimensions of embassy windows and his gentlemanly kindness and caution, most of the real story has been left untold. But no reader, once enmeshed in its enthusiasm, sometimes starry-eyed, will escape the author's charm, which carries over even into his crustier moments. Indeed, with his recent death, Chile lost a firm friend—a more sincere Chilean patriot than nearly all the dubious local politicians on whom he has lavished such unstinted praise.

# The Challenge of Lawrence

*D. H. LAWRENCE: A COMPOSITE BIOGRAPHY.* Volume I, 1885-1919. Gathered, arranged and edited by Edward Nehls. The University of Wisconsin Press. 614 pp. $7.50.

*THE SELECTED LETTERS OF D. H. LAWRENCE.* Edited with an Introduction by Diana Trilling. Farrar, Straus and Cudahy. 322 pp. $4.50.

*THE DARK SUN: A STUDY OF D. H. LAWRENCE.* By Graham Hough. The Macmillan Co. 265 pp. $4.50.

***Mary Freeman***

THESE are the most recent of the biographies, reprints and critical studies that have marked a reviving interest in D. H. Lawrence during the past decade. Each throws light on the reasons for that revival, but from quite different directions.

Edward Nehls quotes F. R. Leavis' dictum that Lawrence is the greatest creative writer in English of our time and then confines himself to presenting Lawrence the man as objectively as we are ever apt to see him. Selections from biographies and memoirs, reminiscences elicited by Nehls, and bits from Lawrence's writings are grouped around significant events so that the reader feels he is present. At first one misses the strong hand of the conventional biographer. Support for almost any opinion could be selected from the wealth of material and Nehls withholds his own conclusions. Yet by reassembling the actors for each scene, he has allowed them to reveal one another as well as Lawrence and thus helped us to judge their judgments of him.

When Lawrence is seen among others, myths tend to fall away and leave him a human being, neither better nor worse than most. However, the productivity of this chronically sick man appears even more extraordinary, and we marvel at the tough core of sanity he managed to preserve while allowing himself the most extreme deviations from conventional behavior and thought. If the two projected volumes of the Nehls biography show the thorough, creative scholarship of the first, there will be little left to say about Lawrence the man.

IN contrast to Nehls's deep respect for his subject, Diana Trilling is troubled by her sponsorship of Lawrence, especially when she is confronted by the bright cynicism of younger critics. Her introduction to *The Selected Letters* is an apology addressed to one of their spokesmen. In this personal rambling essay she tosses about a good deal of lively psychoanalytic nonsense and concedes to her young friend—a little too easily—that Lawrence is dated, of doubtful sanity, and remote from actual life.

The letters that follow refute the last two points, but confirm the first. Lawrence is dated, and in a way that the young seem ill-prepared to cope with. His open, intimate, hortatory style, his unguarded ebullience and imagination are old fashioned, and, as such, draw their quips. The young find the ululations of early Hemingway or Fitzgerald bar crawlers more acceptable. Private, helpless, faceless anguish—the other side of smart worldliness—is more with us now than in the twenties, while warm spontaneous individuality has become anachronistic. Mrs. Trilling touches on this when she questions the wisdom of our young writers' rigid modernity, restricted view of reality, and subservience to fate. There might, she concludes, be something to say for Lawrence's larger vision and his challenge to fate. However, while admiring the indomitable vitality that suffused Lawrence's life and work, she is unable to see any value in his ideas.

Happily these reservations do not preclude her appreciation of Lawrence's letters, which she regards as the best in modern literature. Possibly she is more at ease with them because they do not give the full range of his speculations. Ingratiatingly warm, brilliantly angry, keenly analytical of people and situations, they are also limited by their recipients. Bridges into the world, they were engineered to reach the other shore. Lawrence is strongly present in each letter, but so is his correspondent. Mrs. Trilling calls this putting his best foot forward—though it often turned out to be his worst and led to rugged combat. The letters show an astonishing resilience for one who became so deeply engaged. He was always ready to cut his losses and start over.

GRAHAM HOUGH'S urbane study grew from his belief that Lawrence's "vitalism" had "some of the same disruptive and fertilizing effect in our century as aestheticism did in the nineteenth." He points out that Lawrence was "very near the centre" of "a great

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## Words for Hart Crane

When the Pulitzers showered on some dope
or screw who flushed our dry mouths out with soap,
few people would consider why I took
to stalking sailors, and scattered Uncle Sam's
phony gold-plated laurels to the birds.
Because I knew my Whitman like a book,
stranger in America, tell my country: I,
*Catullus Redivivus,* once the rage
of the Village and Paris, used to play my role
of homosexual wolfing the stray lambs
who hungered by the Place de la Concorde.
My profit was a pocket with a hole.
Who asks for me, the Shelley of my age,
must lay his heart out for my bed and board.

ROBERT LOWELL



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revolution of sensibility" and made deliberate explorations in search of new values." Hough undertakes their evaluation. Analyzing the greater part of Lawrence's work—often with keenness, sometimes with deep penetration, always neatly interweaving consideration of art and idea—he achieves an unusually evocative study. It is then the more disappointing to find inconsistencies that blunt his own points. He tells us that Lawrence's work hardly reflects the events of his time and then that he made "brilliantly intelligent and well-worked-out observations on the contemporary world." He tells us that Lawrence scarcely noticed that the old social edifice was being swept away before his eyes and then that he was one of our sharpest analysts of the decay of our ideals. He tells us that we need spend little time on Lawrence's social theories; then that he penetrated with power and intelligence to the central problems of the time.

THESE inconsistencies may be partly a matter of hasty phrasing, but they reveal also a reluctance to deal with the social aspects of the Lawrence doctrine. Several facets are caught in a few deft strokes, notably Lawrence's quarrel with Christianity, democracy and education. (There is no reference to G. H. Bantockt's more comprehensive study of Lawrence's views on education. Indeed, Hough acknowledges a debt to no critic other than Leavis.) Nevertheless Hough's preference is for Lawrence's adventures in the realm of sensibility, which he likens to the search for integration prescribed by Jung, as against Lawrence's denunciations of the profit system, which he attributes to "a dreary immature class consciousness." The obliqueness of Hough's glance at the social implications of Lawrence's speculations weakens his study.

Nehls has chosen to deal with Lawrence because he is a great writer; Trilling because, by living and writing vividly, he challenged dehumanizing trends; Hough because he represented a revolution in sensibility that "may be uncompleted yet." Perhaps future readers and critics of Lawrence will discover that the gist of Lawrence's challenge lies in his demonstrations that revolutions of sensibility and economics must keep step or lead to perdition.


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# Aristocrat of the Theatre

*THE THEATRE OF ROBERT EDMOND JONES.* Edited and with a chronology by Ralph Pendleton. Wesleyan University Press. 196 pp. $12.50.

***Lincoln Kirstein***

THE Whitney Museum of American Art is holding a fine memorial to Robert Edmund Jones; Wesleyan University has issued an exceptionally well printed and edited collection of many of the same designs, which only lack color.

Jones was the most distinguished American theatre artist of his epoch, from 1915 to 1950. He apprehended the key currents of his time, even if he was not exactly an original. He was a gifted conservative, in love with what was most alive to him in the past, and what was most essential in the present.

Leaving Harvard in 1912, after teaching there two years, he went to Florence, to offer himself as a disciple to Gordon Craig. Craig seems to have rejected him, but even though there was no strict connection, Craig's ideas of an 'ideal' theatre stayed with Jones always. The city of Florence, all corners of its rich cut stone softened by centuries of civil strife and seasons of human inventiveness, was Jones's next greatest influence. His knowledge of the texture of loomed stuffs, the hard formality of wrought iron, the suave feel of worked wood, the noble interruption of arcades characterized his work like a recurrent signature. Their source, for him, was Florentine. Then he went to Berlin where for a year he observed the synthetic energy of Max Reinhardt, who had already vulgarized many of Craig's proposals on the grand scale.

In 1915, Jones was in New York, designing *The Man Who Married A Dumb Wife* for Granville Barker. It is unlikely that Jones had seen much of Mondrian's work by 1915, but his drawing for the Anatole France play, a delicate, arbitrary balance of blocks and lines, recalls the modules of Japanese architecture which served them as a common origin. Just as Jones used Craig before he was available to America, so he introduced the tottering angularity and loose asymmetry of German Expressionism. Analysing a script, he decided for himself what a play was "about" and arrived at key symbols: an Arch, Steps, a Vault, a Window, basing his entire production on the one chosen form. This gave unity to a strong text and wrecked a weak one. Like many New Englanders he was a Transcendentalist, inclined towards mysticism. Oriental philosophy guided him. He used to say: "Simplicity is the most expensive word." Simplicity, the elegant distillation of irreducibles, was what he sought: sometimes an ominous darkness glinting with half a dozen arresting details, reflections behind a shrouded mirror, brass fixtures, crystal pendants; sometimes an airy bareness, a richly worn emptiness, haunted and warmed by echoes, as in his designs for the late O'Neill plays; always an aristocratic conception, spare, proud and thin. In *The Fervent Years*, Harold Clurman's splendid chronicle, there are sharp sketches of Jones in action, working on the job yet quite apart from the production as performance. Having framed a script as secular ritual, he withdrew. Clurman describes the archetypical hacienda for *Night Over Taos* as "passive in quality." It "added to a contemplative, cloistral tone . . . but the approach was not what the play demanded."

The personal pattern he imposed on a script raised the entire profession of scenic-designer in this country; he had a school of imitators long before he

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died. He was always the stage-designer's designer, and less the playwright's and director's. This was particularly true of modern plays. For Shakespeare, Jones could design (although failing when he tried to direct), the whole interpretation. One became so aware of his taste, discrimination and synthesis, that it took a strong book to support him. How many new plays exist now only as titles for his lovely drawings! He was a craftsman of exquisite quality and sensibility, unequalled in detailing an over-all vision.

# THEATRE

## *Harold Clurman*

SPECTACULAR melodrama—which offered train wrecks or chariot races as climactic thrills—and riotously improbable farce were absorbed by the movies around the year 1912. As a result the theatre has become an increasingly quieter or less kinetic medium. With a farce like Norman Krasna's *Who Was That Lady I Saw You With* (Martin Beck) it seems that the stunt show has returned to Broadway from Hollywood.

There is probably an audience for this sort of thing—I heard considerable laughter in the house—although I found it forced and tasteless, with a few good jokes but many more that would not pass muster at a varsity jamboree. What interested me, however, was the fact that when the sets were moved backward and forward, or up and down, the audience was highly intrigued.

The innocence of this reaction at this late date made me realize that the mechanical ingenuity and photographic feats of the movies are now so much taken for granted that the manipulation of ordinary settings in full view of the audience has once again become something to gape at. The plaything fascination of the stage seems more enduring than the fantastic inventiveness of the movies just because the former is so childishly candid while the engineering intricacy of the movies is made to appear a matter of fact.

Yet the American audience reacts with a certain coolness, if not a conscious resistance, to any show of artifice in the writing and acting for the so-called "legitimate" theatre. We welcome the conventions or stylization of vaudeville and musical comedy, but for the more sober forms of drama we insist on the "natural," the "true to life." That a play or its performance may be artificial and serious, both slapstick and significant, is a notion we barely comprehend.

THESE reflections occur to me once more with the resumption of the interrupted run of Anouilh's *The Waltz of the Toreadors* (Coronet) which I directed. The play has been a success from here to Chicago and back, but its critical reception, while generally enthusiastic, has always contained a certain ambiguity.

Anouilh calls the play a farce—which it is. The central character, just before the final curtain, murmurs "What a farce; it's so sad." Yet one critic — a perceptive one — complimented me on having rendered the play funny, while finding fault with the script for not having the texture of a Chekhov play! Another reviewer asks why the play with its new cast (Melvyn Douglas, Betty Field, Lili Darvas) seems more disturbing than on his first view of it.

The confusion arises, I believe, from the play's traditionally French style to which we are still not wholly accustomed. It is the tradition of the Italian masked comedy — grafted by Molière onto his new "bourgeois" drama—in which important, even tragic, material is transmitted in the guise of a comedy which frequently moves toward the farcical. The French, who in the main have always resisted realism on the stage, prefer the theatre theatrical, the theatre of frank artifice in which even passion is expressed by means that create a certain detachment from it, a slight removal from a sense of the actual. That is why so many French plays — old and new — employ characters and plot devices that are as old as the hills. Henry Miller once called the French the Chinese of Western culture.

*The Waltz of the Toreadors* is a farce conceived by a romantic to mock and correct his own romanticism. Its characters are not so much "real people" as types, figures, attitudes. Its surface is often hilarious and toward the end deliberately "corny" (the discovery of the long "lost" son is straight out of ancient comedy) but its core is so grim that one's laughter may strike one at times as unseemly.

The second scene of the second act—in my opinion one of the most brilliant in contemporary drama—is Strindberg turned into farce. Its brilliance consists in preventing us from becoming so totally absorbed by its ferocity that we fail to laugh at it and in never letting us laugh so much that we forget its agony. It is in the very nature of the play's construction (its "civilization") that it remains both painful and funny. It is real, but not realistic, it is "superficial" but it probes, it is "heartless" yet it is shot through with sentiment. We are equally wrong if we think of it as a mere joke or if we seek in it the same literalness of statement or the forthrightness of feeling we expect in the plays presumed to hold the mirror up to nature.

Just as *The Waltz* alternates and combines its contrasting features to create something rather new for us, so it is the only one of Anouilh's plays to achieve a balance and conclusion of content. What Anouilh tells us here is that, though nearly all of us must forego the hope of achieving the ideal of our dreams and must learn to accept some sorry compromise with reality, man must ever renew the struggle to attain the very ideal at which he has failed.


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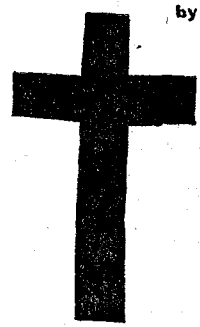

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# LETTER from MUNICH

## *Frank J. Warnke*

AMONG the winter offerings of the Bavarian State Opera were two productions which epitomized, in very different ways, the artistic seriousness and dramatic intensity of the art form which Dr. Johnson defined as "an exotic and irrational entertainment." Stravinsky's "opera-oratorio," *Oedipus Rex*, and Bartok's symbolist music drama *à deux*, *Bluebeard's Castle*, represented almost opposite approaches to the problem of opera as drama, but they both succeeded in being theatre in its most compelling form.

*Oedipus*, composed in 1927, marked Stravinsky's definitive formulation of a new musical classicism. But it is in no way arid or derivative, any more than are the *Symphony of Psalms* or the recent *Rake's Progress*. Intensely melodic, almost Verdiesque vocal lines rise above a dynamic orchestral base in which tense and rapidly changing rhythms impel the drama toward its dénouement. Certain passages — Jocasta's troubled denial of prophecy; Oedipus' anguished recognition of his guilt—seem to restore to the oldest nightmare of the race the significance so often missing in academic translations and modern productions of Sophocles.

The economy, speed and shattering impact of Stravinsky's *Oedipus* make one wonder why the work is more familiar in the concert hall than in the opera house. Timid general managers to the contrary, dramatic vigor is not synonymous with a surfeit of Pagliaccis and, as Munich demonstrated, nothing in *Oedipus* prevents the spectacle inherent in operatic form. There was nothing static in Heinz Arnold's direction and nothing oratorio-like in Helmut Jürgens' stage picture—the protagonists in red cloaks and bizarre high headdresses in movement against a black-robed chorus; over the severely raked stage an enormous dull metal reflector which magnified and distorted the figures of the drama. The stage was marked out in squares which suggested the inevitability of fate and also, perhaps, facilitated the constant and intricate choral movements.

Much of the effect of the production was due to its principals—Ernst Haefliger of Berlin, who combines an imposing stage presence with a flexible and powerful tenor, and Hertha Töpper, leading mezzo of the Munich company, who has in the last two years developed into one of the most exciting of contemporary European singers. The entire cast sang the medieval Latin text with extreme clarity. Stravinsky composed *Oedipus* to a text in a dead language because he wanted to give his treatment the dignity of distance, but I was struck by other advantages. As in Orff's *Trionfi*, the language shows a softness of sound combined with a firmness of articulation which make it ideal for dramatic music. Despite the familiarity of the story, the Munich management equipped the proceedings with a narrator, who periodically interrupted the relentless dramatic movement while the cast froze like bird dogs on the point. Unfortunate, but not fatal.

*OEDIPUS* deals with man's discovery of his tragic destiny. Bartok's only opera, composed in 1911, shows its more specific modernity in that it deals with man's convulsive efforts to prevent the discovery of an always known destiny. The result is a work which is, for all the profundity of its music, more limited and static than *Oedipus*. Its full dramatic effect requires two actors who are inventive as well as accomplished. The action is simple and, to a degree, predictable. In opposition to family and friends, Judith has become Duke Bluebeard's wife and has come with him to his castle. In its dark and cold fastness she finds seven locked doors and, after pleading with him, is allowed to open successively each one. She finds his torture chamber, his armory, his treasure-house, his garden, but everywhere are traces of blood. Against his pleas she opens the sixth door, to find a well of tears, and the seventh, behind which are Bluebeard's three former wives or their shades. As the opera ends she joins them, weeping bitterly, leaving Bluebeard alone in a darkness which is now eternal.

Helmut Jürgens supplied a murky and sinister set appropriate to the psychological climate of *Bluebeard's Castle*, but I didn't find it as wholly right as his *Oedipus* set—for one thing, the doors were spread laterally across the stage instead of receding into its depths; for another, the winding iron staircase on which the protagonists made their entrance suggested a basement apartment more than a castle. It was the singers

*FRANK J. WARNKE, who has been teaching English at Yale, is in Europe for a year as a Morse fellow. Mr. Warnke is a regular contributor to* Opera News.



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who made the opera especially memorable. American basso Keith Engen projected the Duke's tortured conflicts with dramatic subtlety as well as tonal beauty, and Hertha Töpper, again, was beautifully immersed in her role. Some of her interpretive touches were profound—I think, for example, of the listless despair with which, at the fifth door, she sings the words "Gross und reich sind deine Länder." She and Engen, who sang the work when it was introduced to Munich a few years ago, have developed a dramatic interplay which lends the necessary movement to a work whose tensions are largely inward, and both artists are more than equal to the demands of a murderous score which leans heavily on an augmented brass section.

THE FULL stage productions accorded these rarely performed operas typify the kind of fare which Munich's controversial music director, Hungarian Ferenc Fricsay, has been making available during the first year of his tenure. Criticized by some Munich newspapers for his international and untraditional ideas—his introduction of Italian opera into last summer's Festival, for example — he has shown brilliance in his casting and has, even more importantly, demonstrated with the *Oedipus* première and the *Bluebeard* revival, that a major opera house can give a central position in its repertory to modern operas which are, in the most uncompromising sense, serious dramatic presentations.

## The Election

I saw the years
And the years' fall
Carthage's salt
And the villa that
Hadrian built
And the bridge
Over Provence
For water
And the trestle
In the valley of
The Massawippi
That linked
Oceans
That made a nation
And I thought
Of the robin's egg
Blue
And the diamond in the earth
And of Athens
And how you lay
To time to time
Not naked
But in the provenance
Of empires and Sardanapalus
Nude.

RALPH GUSTAFSON

# ART

## *Maurice Grosser*

FORTY paintings by the world's most celebrated amateur, Sir Winston Churchill, are on view at the Metropolitan Museum through the month of March. The subjects are still-lifes, principally of flowers, and landscapes painted on sunny days. The painting method is a basic impressionism. The painter works from nature, putting down on his canvas with as little rearrangement as possible the flat shapes of the colors he finds in the subject before him, his eye half closed to eliminate detail. He allows himself only the liberty of exaggerating the color intensity of the more neutral tones, of rendering brown by a richer orange or lavender for gray.

Judged by amateur standards, Churchill's work is extraordinarily good. His colors are clean and gay like good English decoration. And several of the canvases are so completely lacking in technical faults that, in the absence of the other pictures, they might well be mistaken for the work of a professional—which is highest possible praise for the talented amateur.

THE amateur painter is a great deal more concerned than the professional with the problem of giving his work a professional appearance. He lacks professional training and his painting is likely to be disfigured by faults of drawing, tone relation and composition which the professional painter has early learned to avoid. But even when these faults are absent, the amateur's painting can always be distinguished from the professional's by a quality shared by all amateur work — the complete absence of original ideas.

The amateur painter is in general a cultivated man who has discovered the pleasures of painting and pursues it as recreation and sport. The approach he adopts may be a form of impressionism, or even of abstraction, depending on his age and education, but it will necessarily be a thoroughly familiar one. He is interested in playing a fascinating game, not in making up new rules. He is visiting a world already explored by other painters rather than creating and imposing a world of his own. His real originality has already found its expression elsewhere. Otherwise he would long ago have quit his own profession for that of painter, as Gauguin gave up a career on the stock exchange in his pursuit of art. The price of originality is undivided love.

The naive painter shares with the amateur this lack of originality, but in a different way. The amateur is in general a member of the educated classes, familiar with painting. Consequently, he has available to him for the expression of his ideas, however commonplace they may be, a great variety of possible painting styles. Naive painting, on the other hand, embodies the pictorial concepts of the uneducated, which may be very original. But the naive painter has not been taught to draw, to break up the visual world into its elements of line, shape, form, color and perspective. He does not paint what he sees; he paints what he knows is there, a conceptual world composed of verbal symbols, where walls have bricks, where trees are green


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and have denumerable leaves, where faces are composed of eyes, ears, nose, a mouth and hair. These symbols are the material out of which all naive painting is made. Consequently, all naive pictures, in spite of the fresh and charming ideas they frequently contain, are surprisingly alike, even to color and scale. The naive and amateur painters have this in common, that the ones who have gained the public's attention owe their reputation more to accident of publicity and caprice of collector than to their interest to the profession itself.

Painting such as this may have no place in the history of art. It nevertheless provides immense pleasure and instruction to the people who do it. And I, as a professional painter, view with much more sympathy the amateur, seated before his "motif," happily and quietly communing with nature in watercolor, than I can feel for the ubiquitous amateur photographer with his gadget bag and meters, nervously preparing to perform on nature an impersonal and surreptitious extraction. The painter is the more civilized man.

PETER BLUME, known for his large, detailed, semi-allegorical pictures, is showing at Durlacher's through March 22nd two important finished pictures along with the drawings and sketches used in their making, as well as some thirty independent drawings in pen-and-ink—the whole done during his recent residence at the American Academy in Rome. The drawings, in a firm linear style with a broad-nosed pen, could not be handsomer. The hand is accurate, the execution astonishingly free and convincing. The drawings and sketches leading up to the paintings are also very fine. The finished paintings, however, have little of the drawings' quality.

The themes of the pictures are intricate and promising. The smaller — *Hadrian's Villa*—depicts an olive harvest, the tree in center, its branches filled with men with poles, its roots covered by a circle of cloth to collect the falling olives. The more ambitious — *Passage to Etna* — presents a short-hand history of Rome: from the bottom of the canvas a pyramid of drums and capitals of antique columns rises into the uncovered crypt of a catacomb, in the recesses of whose walls human skeletons lie exposed, while above this is an open street of tenements with festoons of laundry and crowds of small people with sad, sallow faces.

The drawings and plans for both pictures are full of dash and bravura. In the finished work all this is lost. The painting is heavy and labored. The circular movements, so handsome in the sketches, are obscured. The color is bright but inexpressive. There is no light and no real air. And in spite of the sad story told by the sad faces—absent in the sketches and serving here apparently to demonstrate the artist's social consciousness — the works succeed in being only quaint and puckish, like illustrations for some fairy tale for children. Comparing the pictures with the drawings for them, it is obvious that something unfortunate has intervened between the conception and the finished product. The difficulty, I suspect, is an excess of professionalism. For if the excellence of an amateur painter can be seen in how well he comes up to professional standards, the excellence of the professional can be judged by how well he avoids them.

By professionalism, I mean too great a respect for professional standards. The painter wishes above all to demonstrate his professional competence. It this aim he tries to prove too many things, to show himself capable of solving all problems in one picture. He works too hard, is too scrupulous, tries to please too many people, loses his idea and ends by exchanging spontaneity for decorum. It would be a great pity if so fine a talent as Peter Blume's were to stay caught in such a tiresome trap. He should know by now that competence has nothing to do with professional conformity. Competence makes its own standards. Because, as Juan Gris once said, one becomes a classic by not resembling the classics at all.

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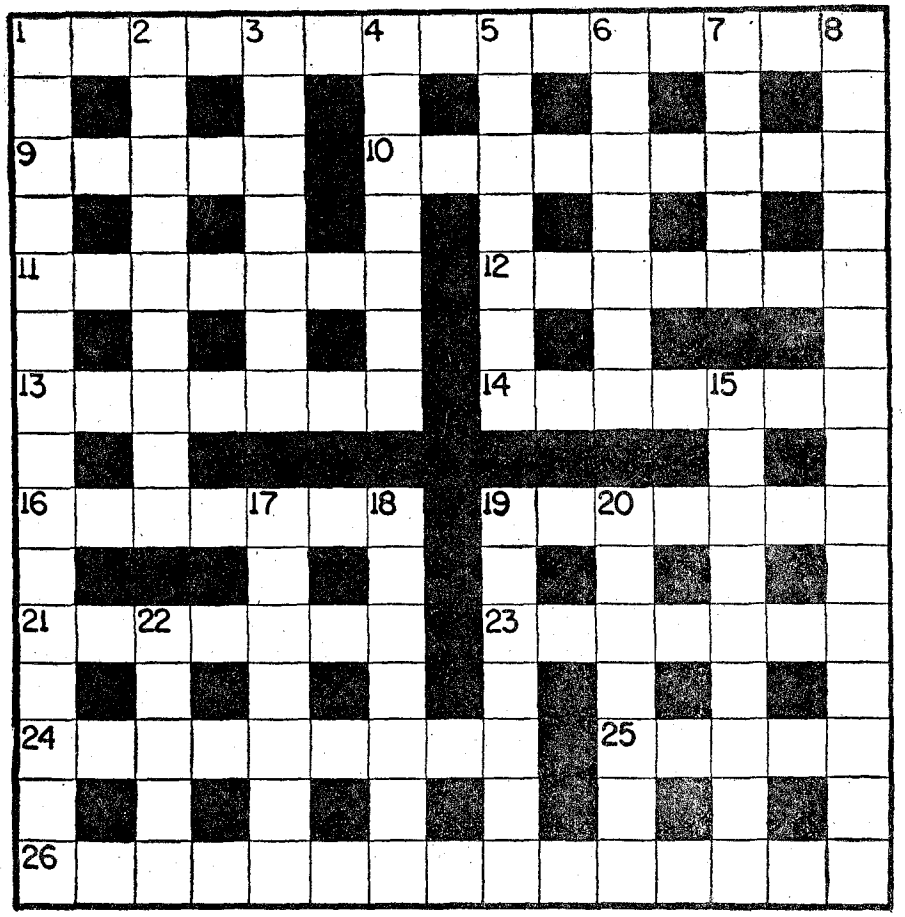
# Crossword Puzzle No. 764

**By FRANK W. LEWIS**



**ACROSS:**

1 He paraded cows he camouflaged to avoid ill-feeling. (8, 7)
9 General opening from the stage. (5)
10 It leaves rapid beating, and creates feeling. (9)
11 Permit 18 to undergo a change. (7)
12 Red aircraft speed to get out of the country this way. (7)
13 Wall hangers of Shakespeare. (7)
14 Light holder that might give away secrets. (7)
16 Their occupation might be fitting, at any rate. (7)
19 I'm beyond nothing but application. (7)
21 Roof in the form of a riverboat character? (7)
23 Cake-makers might appear in order. (7)
24 Ship of old Portugal. (9)
25 Habituate. (5)
26 Moon-made, in secret, but it helps to have them when it comes to application. (15)

**DOWN:**

1 How the mountain guerrillas might be placed somewhat out of order? (6, 9)
2 Is what might be sticking out of the night, a cat? (9)
3 Learns a way to keep one's arms together? (7)
4 Certainly not in luck! (7)
5 To cut up a sort of cat-food might be controversial. (7)
6 Engage in a 5, as a cowboy might. (7)
7 A rice pudding from the heath? (5)
8 Uses ten stones in making quite a formal display. (15)
15 Implying sustained movement. (9)
17 Not exactly maturer—rather might imply a bad setting. (7)
18 This could be still 11, in a way. (7)
19 Where the cribbage peg fits at the craft center, perhaps. (7)
20 Suggests an Irish brawl for the good country man. (7)
22 When it's played, you have to add up to a little less than a hundred. (5)

**SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 763**

Across: 1 DARTBOARD; 9 FIACRES; 10 ARCHIVE; 11 SKI; 12 ADRIFT; 15 SAMENESS; 16 CAREER; 18 and 6 across POST NO BILLS; 20 RAPACITY; 23 URNS; 25 GAS; 28 KNIGHTS; 29 ITERATE; 30 RIGHT; 31 LIGHT YEAR. Down: 1 DOFFS; 2 REALISM; 3 BARGAINING; 4 ABSTRUSE; 5 DWARFS; 6 and 24 across BUCKBOARDS; 7 LEISURE; 8 SLENDERLY; 14 HARASSMENT; 15 SAPSUCKER; 17 PARRYING; 19 and 13 across SINKING FUND; 21 INGRATE; 22 TONSIL; 26 SHEER; 27 SHOT.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